Gudo Beret Kebele 2nd Operational Innovation Platform Meeting Report

Shimelis Mengistu, Temesgen Alene, Abiro Tigabie and Amhaeyesus Belete



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The Africa Research in Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) program comprises three research-for-development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development as part of the U.S. government’s Feed the Future (FtF) initiative.

Through action research and development partnerships, Africa RISING will create opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition, and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

The three projects are led by the International Livestock Research Institute (in the Ethiopian Highlands) and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (in West Africa and East and Southern Africa). The International Food Policy Research Institute leads an associated project on monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment.

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# Introduction to innovation platforms in Africa RISING

[Africa RISING in the Ethiopian highlands](http://africa-rising.net/where-we-work/ethiopian-highlands/) is a research for development project that focuses on **s**ystem interventions in the crop-and-livestock mixed farming system in four large regions (Amhara, Oromia, Tigray and SNNPR). The project understands the need for engaging various research and development partners in addressing system interventions. In order to do this, the project established and has been supporting innovation platforms at field sites**.** The platforms are meant to facilitate meaningful and effective cooperation and learning interactions that prioritize, guide, and evaluate the research and development processes that are specific to the sites. The platforms started helping connect farmers to profitable and efficient value chains for the main commodities. The members of the platforms are contributing to designing, implementing, evaluating project activities and disseminating and communicating research findings though regular meetings and farmer field days.

Innovation platforms and farmer research groups in Africa RISING  
Innovation platforms (IPs) have been formed at all the research sites and strongly link farming communities, the Africa RISING research teams and other public and private actors working in the areas. They work at three levels:

1. At woreda (district) level, strategic platforms support kebele (sub-district) platforms and farmer research groups. They bring together stakeholders to support wider adoption of innovations.
2. At kebele level, operational platforms oversee local research activities, foster integration among farmer research groups, and promote alignment of local on-farm research with district priorities.
3. Farmer research groups (FRGs) are like *innovation clusters*. They involve all farmers who are active around specific clusters of research activities – such as forage production, water delivery or varietal improvement. The role of these groups is to promote scaling of innovation to wider groups of farmers.

Regular IP meetings are held at strategic and operational level for sharing and communicating research findings. This report aims to share the results of one of the operational IP meetings that was organized in one the project research site *Gudo Beret* kebele of Basona Worena woreda, Amhara region.

The second *Gudo Beret* kebele operational IP meeting was held on 24 April 2015. The focus of the meeting was to share the findings of action research activities carried out in both kebeles at Basona Worena by Africa RISING project and its partners in 2014 to local partners for potential scaling up.

# Gudo Beret Kebele 2nd operational IP meeting

**Date**: 24 April 2015

**Venue** – Gudo Beret Kebele Meeting Hall

**Strategic Technical IP Group members** participated are:

1. Abiro Tigabie (Basona Worena woreda IP Facilitator)
2. Amhaeyesus Belete (Basona Worena woreda IP M & E champion)
3. Temesgen Alene (Basona Worena woreda IP secretary)
4. Shimelis Mengistu (Basona Worena woreda IP member)

## Agenda of the meeting:

* Introducing the concept of IP, purpose, functions and FRG approach
* Presentation of progress of research activities implemented in the kebele
* Establishing FRGs/Innovation clusters, selection of representatives from each FRG and local naming for each groups.

# Welcome and brief introduction of IP and FRG concept

Welcome and introduction of the agenda was made by Temesgen Alene, research site coordinator and secretary of Basona Worena woreda innovation platform (IP). Technical group members introduce themselves and their role to farmers. Wondye Desta, the kebele chair person, gave official opening remark for the meeting by elaborating the importance of the meeting for the participants to share and learn based on evidences generated from the action research activities.

The overall objective of the meeting, concept of IP, purpose, function and FRG approach was briefly described by Temesgen. Temesgen addressed in his speech that the meeting aims to communicate and update the progress of the Africa RISING supported research activities in Gudo Beret kebele and share research findings together with observed challenges to all participants. He encouraged active participation by all IP members and farmers to exchange knowledge as well as contribute to taking the innovation to scale. Almost all Africa RISING farmers participated on this meeting. Abiro Tigabie, who is researcher and IP facilitator, was leading the facilitation role throughout the meeting.

Figure 1: Abiro (IP facilitator) facilitating the meeting (Temesgen/ILRI)

Presentation of on-farm research findings from 2014 cropping season **(please insert table of describing the number of research activities, no of farmers participated in each, and findings of PVS, CSM etc)**

List of on-farm research activities, number of farmers participated on each research protocol, how farmers selected to participate on specific research protocol and the way how each research protocols implementedwere presented for the meeting participants by Shimelis Mengistu (Assistant Research site coordinator). The objectives, methodologies and major findings were briefly described during Shimelis’s presentation. The research findings both from Goshe Bado and Gudo Beret kebeles were presented for the purpose of comparison by the farmers in Gudo Beret kebele. These research findings including the mid-season evaluation result of farmer on crops variety selection and the final yield data analysis results were presented for the participating farmers.

# Discussion and Reflection

Abiro initiated the discussion and promoted all participants to raise their opinions, observations and questions they have based on the presentation and their field experiences. A lot of ideas, questions and suggestions were raised from the farmers. As an entry for the discussion, IP technical group members raised the reasons for the observed gaps and expected challenges for technology scaling up in the form of question. Most of raised issues from participants were spinning on highland fruit (apple) and fodder tree (Tree Lucerne) management and related problems, site selection, Faba bean disease and market related challenges to scale up proven technologies. Main and significant agendas as spoken by participants were noted as follow.

* The observed gap as it has been shown from presentation and field visit, especially those on apple and tree Lucerne were mostly due to less attention given by farmers to properly manage as per told by experts and in some cases due to awareness problem. Besides these, there is water shortage problem to timely irrigate these valuable plants. Therefore, as much as possible, the farmers ourselves need to take care of our full responsibility to fetch satisfactory results from introduced technologies. Moreover, there need to be continuous technical support from concerned experts to avoid awareness related problems.
* Gap in site and farmer selection was also a reason for weak growth or loss of a few introduced technologies like apple and tree Lucerne. Farmers were selected simply as he or she raised hands who after taking the technologies fail to properly manage them. Site selection was also need to be considered based on water availability, vicinity for continuous follow up and free of animal contact.
* Tree Lucerne is known for its multipurpose benefits such as farm tool, fodder, wind break and soil fertility improvement. As a result it may be planted around homestead (based on space availability) or on terraces. But yet we are losing this important plant due to uncontrolled free grazing. Therefore, there must be strong direction or bylaw to avoid uncontrolled free grazing.
* Faba bean is one of important crops in the area, but we lost it due to disease. So, we request you to introduce either disease resistance variety or protection mechanisms.
* We want to expand production of proven crop technologies like malt barley. But, we have knowledge gap on production management as well as fear of market problem for the product. Therefore, we request training on production management and establishing farmers’ producer group and linking that group with available market.

Following the farmers suggestions, IP technical group members gave reaction for some of raised issues. Temesgen said that Africa RISING is working to benefit farmers through introduction of different technologies and building capacity while taking research data from those introduced technologies. So that, proper management of those technologies as directed by concerned researchers or experts is mandatory to have quality data which further will be used as base for scaling up. For this purpose, strong, model and committed farmers must be selected. Temesgen also remarked that for the next season the kebele IP will be the one who will select the farmers for each on-farm research activities to make sure that the right farmers with the right creteria will be selected for implementing the research successfully. Kebele IP members have to play the role of selecting the farmers who are committed and can be model farmer for future scaling up plans. This is because you are the farmers there within the community to know more and fairly identify most committed and strong farmers who then can be best model to represent the community and the woreda at large for further scaling up/out of best technologies, Temesgen said.

Abiro elaborate the plan of his organization, Debre Birhan Agricultural Research Center (DBARC) to scale up proven technologies. Abiro on his reflection indicated that farmers will be established as a group to produce selected technology in bulk amount and then it will be easy to link them with existing and newly emerging markets. For instance, malt barley will have very good market opportunity as brewery factories are being establishing in Debre Birhan, Abiro said. Related to Faba bean disease, Abiro said that chemical to protect the disease has been developed by Debre Birhan Agricultural Research Center and this will be used while testing for trial and scaling up Faba bean varieties. Shimelis, having raised the gaps observed during his continuous field observation, said that most farmers consulted during supervision and data collection raised shortage of time as a reason for them to fail to properly manage introduced technologies (for example to water, clean weed, and fence tree Lucerne and apple). Shimelis on his reflection stressed that farmers should not raise time shortage as a reason to cover their gap since these activities are part of their day to day farming activities to improve their lives.

# Farmers Research Group or Innovation cluster establishment and IP update

Eight farmers’ research group (FRGs)/Innovation clusters were established. Each FRG selected its representatives who will be member of operational IP members. Farmer research groups include wheat, Faba bean, potato, Barley, crop residue, apple, Tree Lucerne and irrigated fodder. Each FRG gave local name for its group based on the characteristics and importance of the type of research protocol they engaged. Brief explanation on the role of each FRG representatives and linkage to their members was given for all group members.

Figure 3: Tree Lucerne (“Hulegeb”) FRG (Temesgen/ILRI)

### Table 1: Africa RISING Project: Gudo Beret kebele FRG meeting - Local names for each FRG and list of representatives from each FRG

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S/N | Protocols-Treatment types | Local Name of FRG | FRG members | | | FRG Representatives | | | |
| Male | Female | Total | Name | Sex | Responsibility | Total |
| 1 | Faba bean (PVS-1, F.bean/Forage-21, CSP- 2 | "Yehil Dagna" (Complement all food crops) | 22 | 1 | 23 | Tilahun Kidanie | Male | Leader - Ginaberet sub-kebele & the whole kebele | 6 |
| Shimelis Hailu | Male | Secretary - Ginaberet sub-kebele |
| Tekeltsadik Mulatu | Male | Leader - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| Getaneh Negash | Male | Secretary - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| Kassahun Tefera | Male | Leader - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele |
| Gossa Woldemariam | Male | Secretary - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 2 | Wheat (PVS-1, raised bed-3, Yield gap-27, CSP-1) | 'Min Tesinosh)'' (Used for all purpose) | 28 | 4 | 32 | Teklewold Belay | Male | Leader | 2 |
| Amare Feleke (Mirate Tesfa's Son) | Male | Secretary |
| 3 | Apple | "Tekemshign" (With high economic benefits) | 28 | 13 | 41 | Dejen Yigezu | Male | Leader - Ginaberet sub-kebele & the whole kebele | 6 |
| Hailu Wolde kidan | Male | Secretary - Ginaberet sub-kebele |
| Eshetie Teklemariam | Male | Leader - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| Getye Demsie | Male | Secretary - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| Zemedu Teklie | Male | Leader - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele |
| Teklewold Moges | Male | Secretary - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 4 | Tree Lucerne | "Hulegeb" (Multi-purpose) | 30 | 9 | 39 | Shewaye Woldetsadik | Male | Leader - Ginaberet sub-kebele & the whole kebele | 6 |
| Gashaw Abebe | Male | Secretary - Ginaberet sub-kebele |
| Hailegebriel Teklegiorgis | Male | Leader - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| Woldaregay Gebrekidan | Male | Secretary - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| Hailegnaw Akalewold | Male | Leader - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele |
| Teklewold Belay | Male | Secretary - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 5 | Potato (CSP-2, PVS-1) |  | 3 | 0 | 3 | Dereje Yisema | Male | Leader | 3 |
| Tibebe Kassahun | Male | Secretary |
| Tesfaye Mekuria | Male | Member |
| 6 | Crop Residue | 'Kagnachew" (Check for the management status) | 6 | 0 | 6 | Mekuriya Mengistie | Male | Leader | 2 |
| Hailu Wolde kidan | Male | Secretary |
| 7 | Barley (PVS) |  | 2 | 0 | 2 | Nigussie Digaf | Male | Leader | 2 |
| Dereje Yisema | Male | Secretary |
| 8 | Irrigated/rainfed fodder | 'Nefs Adin" (Reach and support at time of scarcity) | 8 | 7 | 15 | Wolet Tilahun | Female | Leader | 2 |
| Amare Feleke (Mirate Tesfa's Son) | Male | Secretary |

# Farmers need assessment for selected technologies to be scaled up

Technology scaling up plan that was developed during Africa RISING annual planning meeting was presented for the farmers. Type of crop technologies selected, number of planned beneficiary farmers, responsible organizations, methods of implementation and approaches were briefly elaborated for meeting participants by Shimelis. Shimelis, after his presentation encourage farmers with interest and capacity to participate in buying initial seed and produce selected crop technologies so that technical support and training will be given for those interested farmers about production techniques of that specific commodity. Based on this a lot of farmers showed great interest to participate and some registered during the meeting while others not due to either lack of financial capital to purchase seed or unable to decide at the meeting. In this meeting it has been agreed with development agent to further discuss through IP on the approach of collecting many from interested farmers and start registering those interested farmers both from Africa RISING project participants and non-participants.

# Annexes

## Annex 1: List of Gudo Beret kebele general operational IP members

| No. | Full name | Organization | Position/Job title |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Wondiye Desta | Gudo Beret Kebele adminstration office | Head |
| 2 | Engdasew Abebe | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Head |
| 3 | Wondosen Hailemariam | Gudo Beret Kebele office of land management & administration | Expert |
| 4 | Dimimi Demeke | Gudo Beret Kebele health office | Health extension worker |
| 5 | Girma Lakew | Gudo Beret Kebele primary cooperative | Chairman |
| 6 | Tadesse W/Tadik | Yimsrach saving & credit association | Secretary |
| 7 | Etagnehu Getaneh | Gudo Beret Kebele women affairs | Chairman |
| 8 | Moges Deksiwos | Mush irrigation cooperative | Chairman |
| 9 | Ashenafi Yifru | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Crop DA (development agent) |
| 10 | Eshete Kebede | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Livestock DA (development agent) |
| 11 | Melkamu Dagie | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | NRM DA (development agent) |
| 12 | Derse Belayneh | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Vet technician |
| 13 | Mesfin Tadeses | SUNARMA | Extension worker |
| 14 | Soliyana Seife | Gudo Beret Kebele office | Cooperative expert |
| 15 | Tsdale Beza | Youth association | Chairman |
| 16 | Kes Tebibe Shewakena | Mush Zena Markos | Religious leader |
| 17 | Woldemariam Akalwold | Mush/Salasfa community | Elders |
| 18 | Tilahun Kidanie | Faba bean FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader - Ginaberet sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 19 | Shimelis Hailu | Faba bean FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Ginaberet sub-kebele |
| 20 | Tekeltsadik Mulatu | Faba bean FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| 21 | Getaneh Negash | Faba bean FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| 22 | Kassahun Tefera | Faba bean FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele |
| 23 | Gossa Woldemariam | Faba bean FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 24 | Teklewold Belay | Wheat and Tree Lucerene FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader for wheat FRG and secretary for tree lucerne FRG |
| 25 | Amare Feleke (Mirate Tesfa's Son) | Wheat and irrigated fodder FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary |
| 26 | Dejen Yigezu | Apple FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader - Ginaberet sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 27 | Hailu Wolde kidan | Apple FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Ginaberet sub-kebele |
| 28 | Eshetie Teklemariam | Apple FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| 29 | Getye Demsie | Apple FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| 30 | Zemedu Teklie | Apple FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele |
| 31 | Teklewold Moges | Apple FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 32 | Shewaye Woldetsadik | Tree Lucerne FGR/Innovation cluster | Leader - Ginaberet sub-kebele & the whole kebele |
| 33 | Gashaw Abebe | Tree Lucerne FGR/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Ginaberet sub-kebele |
| 34 | Hailegebriel Teklegiorgis | Tree Lucerne FGR/Innovation cluster | Leader - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| 35 | Woldaregay Gebrekidan | Tree Lucerne FGR/Innovation cluster | Secretary - Gudoberet zuria sub-kebele |
| 36 | Hailegnaw Akalewold | Tree Lucerne FGR/Innovation cluster | Leader - Mush/Salasfa sub-kebele |
| 38 | Mekuriya Mengistie | Crop residue FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader |
| 39 | Hailu Wolde kidan | Crop residue FRG/Innovation cluster | Secretary |
| 40 | Wolet Tilahun | Irrigated/rainfed fodder FRG/Innovation cluster | Leader |

## Annex 2: List of operational IP technical group members

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Full name | Organization | Role in the IP |
| **1** | Engdasew Abebe | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Chairman |
| **2** | Wondosen Hailemariam | Gudo Beret Kebele land management & administration office | Secretary |
| **3** | Eshete Kebede | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Facilitator |
| **4** | Melkamu Dagne | Gudo Beret Kebele office of agriculture | Member |
| **5** | Dimimi Demeke | Gudo Beret Kebele health office | » |

## Annex 3: Basona Worena wored, Gudo Beret 2nd operational IP meeting ageneda

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time | Activity | Presenter | Facilitator |
| 2:30-3:00 | Registration |  | Engdasew and Hailemeskel |
| 3:00 -3:10 | Welcome, introduction and opening remarks | Temesgen Alene/Wondye Desta | Abiro |
| 3:10 -3:20 | Introducing the objective of the meeting | Temesgen Alene |
| 3:30-3:50 | Progress of Research Protocols Implemented at Gudo Beret kebele of Basona Worena Woreda in 2014 cropping season | Shimelis Mengistu |
| 3:50-4:20 | Discussion |  |
| 4:20-5:50 | FRG/Innovation cluster establishment and IP update | IP technical group |
| 5:50-6:30 | Farmers need assessment for scaling up | Temesgen & Shimelis |
| 6:30-6:40 | **Closing** | Abiro Tigabie |
| 6:40-7:00 | IP member group photo |  | Africa RISING |